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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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10/541,842

07/12/2005

Rene Brunone

0512-1286

4280

466 7590 10/30/2006

YOUNG & THOMPSON
745 SOUTH 23RD STREET
2ND FLOOR
ARLINGTON, VA 22202

EXAMINER

UPTON, CHRISTOPHER

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1724

DATE MAILED: 10/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/541,842

Applicant(s)

BRUNONE, RENE

Examiner

Christopher Upton

Art Unit

1724

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

1. The specification should include section headings.
2. Claims 12, 13 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 12, 13 and 15 are method claims improperly dependent on an apparatus claim, and should be rewritten in independent form. The claims should also avoid indefinite language, such as "especially."

Claims 12, 13 and 15 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claims 12, 13 and 15 are method claims improperly dependent on an apparatus claim, and therefore fail to limit the structure recited in the parent claim.

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 1724

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-3, 5-7, 10-12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Moar ('581).

The Moar '581 patent discloses a conveyor for floating substances having integral buoyancy tubes on each side, shown to be of differing cross sections and therefore different buoyancies in figure 2, as claimed.

5. Claims 1-3, 5, 10-12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Moar ('122).

The Moar '122 patent discloses a conveyor for floating substances having integral buoyancy tubes on each side, as claimed.

6. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moar.

Claim 4 differs from the two Moar references in recitation of the inflation pressure. It is submitted that this would have been an operational parameter, depending on the characteristics of the substances to be separated, the size of the conveyor, and other site specific considerations, and therefore fails to patentably distinguish over the Moar patents.

7. Claims 8, 9, 13 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moar in view of Markel, Anderson or Laman.

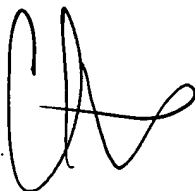
Claims 8, 9, 13 and 15 differ from the Moar patents in recitation of ribs on the conveyor. It is known to put ribs on a conveyor, as exemplified by Markel, Anderson and Laman. It would therefore have been obvious for one skilled in the art to add ribs to the conveyor of Moar, to assist in moving the substance. With respect to claims 9 and 15, it is submitted that whether to place ribs on one or both sides of the conveyor would obviously depend on the site specific considerations, and therefore fails to patentably distinguish over the prior art.

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Other references of interest include Challener, Rolls, Ahrendt, Muramatsu, Simpson, Ridgway, Summerhayes and Channell.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christopher Upton whose telephone number is 571-272-1169. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30-5:00, off every other Monday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Duane Smith can be reached on 571-272-1166. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CU' with a stylized flourish.

Christopher Upton
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1724